CHURCH NEWS

FROM THE NORTHERN COUNTRIES

Edited by
THE NORTHERN ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE
Sigtuna, Sweden

Director: Dr. HARRY JOHANSSON, Sigtuna, Sweden
Editor: Rev. JOHS. LANGHOFF, Øster Egesborg per Mern, Denmark

No. 41 October 30th, 1958.

Nordic-German Conference in Lejondal.

The Nordic-German conference on the Christian conception of history which has been prepared since a long time was held at Lejondal, Sweden, from October 11th - 15th. There was a deep feeling of loss of the suddenly deceased Bishop Herntrich of Hamburg who had taken an active part in the preparations of the conference. The conference expressed their satisfaction that 6 participants from East Germany had been allowed to attend the conference, but at the same time it was deeply deplored that no exit permit had been granted to President Hildebrandt and Dr. Scharf from East Berlin.

After an introduction by the Minister for Church and Education of Slesvig-Holstein Edo Osterloh the Bible's conception of history was discussed in connection with the actual literature. Professor N.H. Søe, Copenhagen, and Rev. Olov Hartman, Sigtuna, opened the discussion on "History as an obvious or hidden acting of God". An intense discussion followed upon two addresses given by Dr. Erich Müller-Gangloff, Berlin, and Dr. Th. Boman, Oslo, on "Unsolved problems of the past".

A special attention was given to Bishop Otto Dibelius' address on "Europe - a common responsibility of the Evangelical Church?" The Bishop gave a broad survey of the factors which have created the greatness of Europe and caused its contribution to world history, and he indicated the central position of responsible free man in the development of Europe. Now it were necessary to take care of the European heritage. Bishop Dibelius also outlined the plans for a European ecumenical conference at Nyborg Strand, Denmark, from January 6th - 9th, 1959.

The conference ended with a discussion on "The European co-operation in view of Christendom" which was introduced by Bishop H. Høgsbro, Nykøbing F., Denmark.

The conference at Lejondal was arranged by the Nordic-German Church Convention which has arranged Nordic-German conferences in Germany and in the Northern countries every year since 1950. Among the participants from the Northern countries were the Archbishop of Finland Dr. I. Salomies, the new Archbishop of Sweden Dr. Gunnar Hultgren and the Swedish bishops Cullberg and Björkquist; the latter preached at the service on Sunday in a small country church from the 12th century. Chairman of the conference was Dr. Conrad Bonnevie-Svendsen, Oslo.

CHURCH NEWS

FROM THE NORTHERN COUNTRIES

Edited by
THE NORTHERN ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE
Sigtuna, Sweden

Director: Dr. HARRY JOHANSSON, Sigtuna, Sweden
Editor: Rev. JOHS. LANGHOFF, Øster Egesborg pr. Næstved, Denmark

No. 41 October 20th, 1958.

Nordic-German Conference in Iejondal.

The Nordic-German conference on the Christian conception of history which has been prepared since a long time was held at Iejondal, Sweden, from October 11th - 15th. There was a keen feeling of hope of the endeavoring deepened through Reformation of Germany who had taken an active part in the preparations of the conference. The conference expressed their satisfaction that 6 participants from East Germany had been allowed to attend the conference, but at the same time it was deeply deplored that no delegate from East Zone had arrived to Dresdent Kirchentag and Dr. Dodend from East Zone.

After an introduction by the Minister for Church and Education of Slesvig-Holstein, Dr. Oberländer the Bible's conception of history was discussed in connection with the actual situation. Professor M.H. Ope, Copenhagen, and Rev. Olav Hermes, Stuttgart, opened the discussion on "History as an object or during setting of Ear". Jan Ritsema discussion followed upon two lectures given by Dr. British Muller-Generlott, Berlin, and Dr. Dr. Sommer, Oslo, on "Unsolved problems of the past".

A special attention was given to Minister Oto Mikkelsen on "Europe - a common responsibility of the Christian Church". The Bishop gave a broad survey of the factors which have created the greatness of Europe and caused its secularization to world history, and he indicated the central position of responsible free man in the development of Europe. Why it was necessary to take care of the European heritage. Bishop Mikkelsen cited critical the plans for a European commercial conference at Ribbe Sound, Denmark, from January 6th - 9th, 1959.

The conference ended with a discussion on the Jerusalem co-operation in view of Christendom which was introduced by Bishop H. Hegaard, Nykøbing F., Denmark.

The conference at Iejondal was arranged by the Nordic-German Church Convention which has arranged Nordic-German conferences in Germany and in the Northern countries every year since 1950. Among the participants from the Northern countries were the Archbishop of Finland Dr. I. Salomies, the new Archbishop of Sweden Dr. Bunge Hultgren and the Swedish bishops Gustafson and Björkquist; the latter preached at the service on Sunday in a small country church from the 12th century. Chairman of the conference was Dr. Conrad Bonnevie-Svendsen, Oslo.

Bishop Halfdan Høgsbro Elected President of Northern Missionary Council.

Bishop Halfdan Høgsbro, Nykøbing-Falster, Denmark, was elected President of the Northern Missionary Council for the next period of four years at the conference lasting four days on current mission problems held recently in Helsinki (Helsingfors). The Northern Missionary Council is a joint council for the various national missionary councils in the Northern countries.

The Lutheran Church in Santalistan Independent from 1965?

A statement in the Norwegian press by the President of the National Council of the Norwegian Santal Missionary Society, Rev. H.E. Wisløff, reveals that the Lutheran Church in Santalistan in India, which is a fruit of the combined efforts of Norwegian, Danis and American evangelization, will probably become completely independent by January 1st, 1965, as it will then be able to take over also the financial responsibilities. An Indian, Munski Tudu, was elected President of the Church recently and in the near future the Church will be constituted as an independent Church and take over the administration as from January 1st, 1959. A number of questions in connection with the future of the Church will be discussed at a Church Assembly this autumn in Assam where the leaders of the work in Norway, Denmark and America will meet with both representatives of the young church and the missionaries.

Should the Church in Santalistan prove to be able to manage on its own, the Santal Missionary Society plans to take up new work in other mission fields.

DENMARK

Foreign Lutheran Clergymen Not Allowed to Baptize in Denmark.

It has caused considerable emotion in Denmark that the Ministr of Church Affairs, in accordance with present law, has refused a German Lutheran clergyman permission to baptize his grandchild, bor in Denmark, in one of the churches belonging to the Lutheran Nation Church. In a statement to the "Kristeligt Dagblad" the Director of the Ministry explains that according to the present wording of the law a baptism not conducted by a clergyman in the Danish Lutheran National Church or by a minister in one of the recognized Church communities is not legally valid.

In a leader the "Kristeligt Dagblad" describes the Ministry's decision as being peculiar and asks whether this should really be a necessary consequence of the present law. In that case the law must be altered as quickly as possible, the paper writes, as such a ruli "is quite unreasonable, not to say disgusting, from both a human an a Christian point of view, and not the least from the point of view of the Church". The paper refers to the fact that both midwives and others are entitled to baptize infants in cases of emergency and feels that it should be quite natural for a Danish clergyman belong ing to the Lutheran National Church to authorize a colleague belong ing to the same confession to baptize a child on his behalf. Should it really be necessary for the sake of church order to demand an application for permission, such permission ought to be granted as matter of course by the bishop, the paper feels, except in quite exceptional cases.

Bishop Haldan Hansen elected President of Northern Missionary Council.

Bishop Haldan Hansen, Nykøbing-Falster, Denmark, was elected President of the Northern Missionary Council for the next period of four years at the conference lasting four days on current mission problems held recently in Helsingfors (Helsingfors). The Northern Missionary Council is a joint council for the various national missionary councils in the Northern countries.

The Lutheran Church in Sarawak Independent from 1965?

A statement in the Norwegian press by the President of the National Council of the Norwegian Sarawak Missionary Society, Rev. H.E. Wislöff, reveals that the Lutheran Church in Sarawak in India, which is a fruit of the combined efforts of Norwegian, Danish and American evangelization, will probably become completely independent by January 1st, 1965, as it will then be able to take over also the financial responsibilities. An Indian, Bhakt Tudu, was elected President of the Church recently and in the near future the Church will be constituted as an independent church and take over the administration as from January 1st, 1965. A number of questions in connection with the future of the Church will be discussed at a Church Assembly this autumn in Assam where the leaders of the work in Norway, Denmark and America will meet with both representatives of the young church and the missionaries.

Should the Church in Sarawak prove to be able to manage on its own, the Sarawak Missionary Society plans to take up new work in other mission fields.

DENMARK

Foreign Lutheran Clergymen Not Allowed to Baptize in Denmark.

It has caused considerable emotion in Denmark that the Ministry of Church Affairs, in accordance with Danish law, has refused a German Lutheran clergyman permission to baptize his grandchild, born in Denmark, in one of the churches belonging to the Lutheran Danish Church. In a statement to the "Kristelig Dagblad" the Minister of the Ministry explains that according to the present wording of the law a baptism not conducted by a clergyman in the Danish Lutheran National Church or by a minister in one of the recognized Church communities is not legally valid.

In a leader the "Kristelig Dagblad" describes the Ministry's decision as being peculiar and asks whether this should really be necessary consequence of the present law. In that case the law must be altered as quickly as possible, the paper writes, as such a rule "is quite unreasonable, not to-say disgusting, from both a human and a Christian point of view, and not the least from the point of view of the Church". The paper refers to the fact that both midwives and others are entitled to baptize infants in cases of emergency and feels that it should be quite natural for a Danish clergyman belonging to the Lutheran National Church to authorise a colleague belonging to the same confession to baptize a child on his behalf. Should it really be necessary for this sort of church order to demand an application for permission, such permission ought to be granted as a matter of course by the bishop, the paper feels, except in quite

Sixth Woman Pastor in Denmark Ordained.

Recently the 50-years old Solveig Bording, former folk high school teacher, was ordained in Maribo Cathedral by Bishop Halfdan Høgsbro. Miss Bording thus becomes the sixth woman pastor in Denmark since the passing of the Act in 1948 allowing women to take holy orders in the Lutheran National Church. She has no theological training, but has been approved as qualified to holy orders by a specially appointed committee of three bishops. Miss Bording has been appointed curate to the congregation of Nørre Ørslev on Lolland-Falster where one of the three first women in orders has worked for a number of yea

Spiritual Service Deals with 3.200 Appeals in One Year.

The "St. Nicolai Service" which was established a year ago in the church of St. Nicolai by the Church Army in Copenhagen as a round-the-clock service in the heart of the city has received no less than 3.209 requests for assistance during that time. Two thirds of these requests have come from men and one third from women. 120 clergmen and 200 laymen have taken turns at doing duty at the centre which is open from 9 a.m. to 3 a.m.

In Odense and Ålborg, two big Danish towns in the country, similar centres will be opened on November 1st, and, since the underlying idea has been borrowed from the centre in Copenhagen, the name will here, too, be the "St. Nicolai Service".

All appeals for assistance may be anonymous and perhaps this fact is a not insignificant reason for the many requests.

First Danish Prize Winning Contest in Mission Knowledge.

The Danish Missionary Council has arranged a prize winning competition in mission science in order to encourage clergymen and others to take up scientific studies of mission activities. The contest includes two subjects, one of which in particular may be of importance to future developments, viz. a fundamental study of the relations between the Danish Lutheran National Church and the Danish missionary societies.

Danish President of the Evangelical Alliance in Europe.

At a recent meeting in Oslo the Rev. Georg Bartholdy, Copenhagen, was elected President of the Evangelical Alliance in Europe which is a joint organ for all the Evangelical Alliances in Europe, England excepted. Rev. G. Bartholdy, the present Vice President, succeeds the recently deceased Swiss clergyman, Rev. Walter Zizl, as President. As Vice President was elected Paul Schmidt, Union Director Bad Homburg.

At the end of the meeting a resolution was passed which reads:

"We declare that we wish to live and work on the old foundation as expressed in the declaration of faith from 1846 of the Evangelical Alliance.

Also in the future our aim will be to lead believing Christians together in joint supplications for which reason we still regard the week of prayer at the beginning of January as being extremely important and helpful.

Sixth Woman Pastor in Denmark Ordained.

Recently the 30-years old Sofienia Hordting, former folk high school teacher, was ordained in Aarhus Cathedral by Bishop Halldrup Rosenörn. Miss Hordting thus becomes the sixth woman pastor in Denmark since the passing of the Act in 1948 allowing women to take holy orders in the Lutheran National Church. She has no theological training, but has been approved as qualified to hold orders by a specially appointed committee of three bishops. Miss Hordting has been appointed to the congregation of Nørre Vrå in Lejano-Salsey where one of the three first women in orders was worked for a number of years.

Spiritual Service Deals with 5.200 Appeals in One Year.

The "St. Nicolai Service" which was established a year ago in the church of St. Nicolai by the Church Army in Copenhagen as a round-the-clock service in the heart of the city has received no less than 5.209 requests for assistance during that time. Two thirds of these requests have come from men and one third from women. 200 men and 200 laymen have taken turns at doing duty at the centre which is open from 8 a.m. to 5 a.m.

In Odense and Aalborg, two big Danish towns in the country, similar centres will be opened on November 1st, and, since the modern living idea has been borrowed from the country in Copenhagen, the name will here, too, be the "St. Nicolai Service".

All appeals for assistance may be anonymous and perhaps this fact is not the insignificant reason for the many requests.

First Danish Prize Winning Contest in Mission Knowledge.

The Danish Missionary Council has organized a prize winning competition in mission science in order to encourage clergymen and others to take up scientific studies of mission activities. The contest includes two subjects, one of which in particular may be of importance to future developments, viz. a fundamental study of the relations between the Danish Lutheran National Church and the Danish missionary societies.

Danish President of the Evangelical Alliance in Europe.

At a recent meeting in Oslo, the Rev. Oscar Bentzlidy, Copenhagen, was elected President of the Evangelical Alliance in Europe which is a joint organ for all the Evangelical Alliances in Europe, England excepted. Rev. O. Bentzlidy, the present Vice President, succeeds the recently deceased Swiss clergyman, Rev. Walter Lüthi, as President. As Vice President was elected Paul Schmidt, Union Director, Bad Homburg.

At the end of the meeting a resolution was passed which reads:

"We declare that we wish to stay and work on the old foundation as expressed in the declaration of faith from 1846 of the Evangelical Alliance.

Also in the future our aim will be to lead believing Christians together in joint supplications for which reason we still regard the week of prayer at the beginning of January as being extremely important and helpful.

Taking our stand on our old Biblical and evangelical revivalist policy we wish to appeal to the ecumenical movement and the big Churches to emphasize both the necessity of a personal conversion as well as the fact that the Church is only really alive, in a true Christian and biblical sense, where people work for evangelization and unite in a living fellowship in order to pray and work.

Our thoughts go to the small evangelical circles in Southern Europe and to the congregations in Eastern Europe and wherever it is possible we want to extend our hands to them in order to strengthen the Christian fellowship with them also and to try to help them bear their difficulties. On this foundation we wish to continue in honest work and by all means to strive for the preservation of fellowship with those who want to pray and work along these lines."

Erik Rostbøll to be the Head of a Danish Folk Academy.

Inspired by the experiences from the evangelical academies in Germany a group of Danish church people have founded a Danish Folk Academy which should serve as a religious forum where different circles in the society might meet and get into contact with each other across existing dividing lines. The author Erik Rostbøll has been chosen to be head of the Academy. So far there is no fixed programme for the work, but there will be arranged meetings and conferences in various places in the country. The home of Erik Rostbøll on Randbøl Heath in Jutland will, however, serve as a work centre.

FINLAND

Church Assembly Decides on Important Matters.

The highest authority of the Finnish Lutheran National Church, the Church Assembly, which takes place every 5th year, met for its ordinary session on October 1st, at Turku (Åbo) Academy under the chairmanship of Archbishop Salomies. The opening service at which Dr. Erkki Kurki-Suonio preached was held in Turku (Åbo) Cathedral. The Church Assembly is to decide on a number of important matters, such as the introduction of a new church canon and a new church service-book (with rituals and texts for services). The question of re-marriage of divorced persons which has been debated at no less than 13 church assemblies since 1886 is also to be considered once more in connection with a proposal for a special ritual to be used at the marriage of divorcees. Furthermore, the establishment of a new office for women in the service of the Church is to be decided upon and in this connection the question of women taking holy orders will also be discussed.

The Church Assembly which is predominantly composed of laymen also includes all the bishops, various representatives of the Church authorities, the highest Finnish law courts, the theological and law faculties in Helsinki (Helsingfors) and representatives of clergy and laity in all the dioceses.

Taking our stand on our old Biblical and evangelical revivalist policy we wish to appeal to the ecumenical movement and the big Churches to emphasize both the necessity of a personal conversion as well as the fact that the Church is only really alive, in a true Christian and biblical sense, where people work for evangelization and unite in a living fellowship in order to pray and work.

Our thoughts go to the small evangelical circles in Southern Europe and to the congregations in Eastern Europe and wherever it is possible we want to extend our hands to them in order to strengthen the Christian fellowship with them also and to try to help them bear their difficulties. On this foundation we wish to continue in humble work and by all means to strive for the preservation of fellowship with those who want to pray and work along these lines."

Erik Rostbøll to be the Head of a Danish Folk Academy.

Inspired by the experiences from the evangelical academies in Germany a group of Danish church people have founded a Danish Folk Academy which should serve as a religious forum where different circles in the society might meet and get into contact with each other across existing dividing lines. The author Erik Rostbøll has been chosen to be head of the Academy. So far there is no fixed programme for the work, but there will be arranged meetings and conferences in various places in the country. The home of Erik Rostbøll on Randbøl Heath in Jutland will, however, serve as a work centre.

FINLAND

Church Assembly Decides on Important Matters.

The highest authority of the Finnish Lutheran National Church, the Church Assembly, which takes place every 5th year, met for its ordinary session on October 1st, at Turku (Abo) Academy under the chairmanship of Archbishop Salomies. The opening service at which Dr. Erkki Kurki-Suonio preached was held in Turku (Åbo) Cathedral. The Church Assembly is to decide on a number of important matters, such as the introduction of a new church canon and a new church service-book (with rituals and texts for services). The question of re-marriage of divorced persons which has been debated at no less than 15 church assemblies since 1886 is also to be considered once more in connection with a proposal for a special ritual to be read at the marriage of divorcees. Furthermore, the establishment of a new office for women in the service of the Church is to be decided upon and in this connection the question of women taking holy orders will also be discussed.

The Church Assembly which is predominantly composed of layman also includes all the bishops, various representatives of the Church authorities, the highest Finnish law courts, the theological and law faculties in Helsinki (Helsingfors) and representatives of clergy and laity in all the dioceses.

93.34 % of the Population Members of the National Church.

From a statistics, worked out on the occasion of the Finnish Church Assembly, it appears that at the beginning of January 1957, 4.028.089 Finns, or 93.34 % of the whole population, were members of the Lutheran National Church. The corresponding figure for 1950 was 95.16 %. There are 568 congregations and 558 parishes in the Lutheran National Church. The number of churchgoers amounted to app. 7.2 million in 1956. During the five years from 1952 - 1956 an average of 12.336 people went to church on a Sunday, or 29.2 persons per 1.000 inhabitants, which is 0.8 % less than in the previous five year period.

At the end of 1956 there were 11.144 Sunday Schools, which is 1.062 more than in 1951, and the number of pupils had increased with 53.889 to 303.852. In 1956 there were 2.243 civil marriages, that is 6.7 % of all the marriages. In 1951 the corresponding figure was 4.4% 81.397 people have resigned from the Lutheran National Church from 1952 - 1956 while 11.460 have applied for membership in the Church. Most of those who have withdrawn give church taxation as reason for the withdrawal.

During the five year period 36 buildings for religious enterprises have been erected, and of these the 11 are churches.

Many New Theological Students.

This autumn no less than 95 new divinity students have joined the theological faculty at the University of Helsinki (Helsingfors), 61 of these are men and 34 women. At the theological faculty at Turku (Åbo) 11 new divinity students have been entered of whom 5 are men and 6 women. This is the largest number of new theological students to be entered in one year since the war.

"Science Exists for the Sake of Man".

In his address at the opening of the University last month in Helsinki (Helsingfors) the Rector, Edwin Linkomies, clearly stated his standpoint with regard to a most topical matter in connection with modern science. Among other things he said:

"At the present stage of research it is quite possible to imagin a scientist discovering something which in the corse of subsequent experiments may start a chain reaction resulting in the total destruction of the entire globe. Will it, then, be right for a scientist to carry out such an experiment which is known to be dangerous? No doubt there will be a number of scientists who are ready to answer the question in the affirmative, maintaining that science cannot accept any other directions than the search for truth and that science must carry out any experiment necessary in order to explain a fact regardless of the consequences. Such an attitude is, however, not in the least justified. All science exists for the sake of man, in order to enrich the common treasure of knowledge of humanity. Any knowledge obtained at the expense of the annihilation of thos for whose sake it was to be gained must, of course, be worthless."

23.34 % of the Population Members of the National Church.

From a statistics, worked out in the occasion of the Finnish Church Assembly, it appears that at the beginning of January 1957, Omaan.Asg-Vinne, or 23.34 % of the whole population, were members of the Lutheran National Church. The corresponding figure for 1950 was 2.08 %. There are 588 congregations and 558 parishes in the Lutheran National Church. The number of churchgoers amounted to approx. 1.2 million in 1956. During the five years from 1952 - 1956 an average of 12.376 people went to church on a Sunday, or 29.2 persons per 1.000 inhabitants, which is 0.6 % less than in the previous five year period.

At the end of 1956 there were 1.144 Sunday baptisms, which is 1.062 more than in 1951, and the number of public and increased with 53.889 to 303.882. In 1956 there were 2.243 civil marriages, that is 6.7 % of all the marriages. In 1951 the corresponding figure was 4.4%. 81.357 people have resigned from the Lutheran nations. Church from 1952 - 1956 while 11.460 have applied for membership in the Church. Most of those who have withdrawn give church tax as reason for the withdrawal.

During the five year period 32 churches for religious ceremonies have been erected, and of these the 11 are churches.

Many New Theological Students.

This autumn no less than 99 new activity students have joined the theological faculty at the University of Helsinki (Helsingfors). 61 of these are men and 34 women. At the theological faculty of Turku (Abo) 11 new divinity students have been admitted of whom 5 are men and 6 women. This is the largest number of new theological students to be entered in one year since the war.

"Science Exists for the Sake of Man".

In his address at the opening of the University last month in Helsinki (Helsingfors) the Rector, Dr Vilho Hirvisalo, clearly stated his standpoint with regard to a most topical matter in connection with modern science. Among other things he said:

"At the present stage of research it is quite possible the immediate a scientist discovering something which is the cause of subcontinent expectations may start a chain reaction resulting in the total destruction of the entire globe. Will it, then, be right for a scientist to carry out such experiments which is known to be dangerous? No doubt there will be a number of scientists who are ready to answer the question in the affirmative, maintaining that science cannot accept any other directions than the search for truth and that science must carry out any experiments necessary in order to explain a fact regardless of the consequences. Such an attitude is, however, not in the least justified. All science exists for the sake of man, in order to enrich the common treasury of knowledge of humanity. Any knowledge obtained at the expense of the annihilation of the for whose sake it was to be gained must, of course, be worthless."

UNESCO-Book on Medieval Churches in Finland.

During his visit in Finland recently, the head of the UNESCO Luther H. Evans stated that the Organization is preparing the publication of a book on medieval church architecture in Finland. The book is to be part of a series of books on works of art not known outside the frontiers of their respective home countries.

The Government Promises Financial Aid to the Churches in Porkkala.

At a meeting last month with Bishop G.O. Rosenqvist and representatives of the congregations in the Porkkala district the Minister of Finance, Päiviö Hetemäki, held out the prospect of a substantial grant on next year's budget toward the restoration of the churches in Kyrkslätt and Degerby. The church authorities have applied to Government for 20 million Finnish marks, 15 million of which should go to the Kyrkslätt congregation and the 5 million to the Ingå congregation to which Degerby church now belongs. Here the church has been repaired but the restoration of the churchyard and the vicarage still remains. The church in Kyrkslätt is expected to be completed by next year.

As may be remembered, the Porkkala district was returned to Finland two years ago by the Soviet Union who had occupied it as a military region since the end of the war.

Orthodox Theological Seminary Celebrates Anniversary.

Finland's Orthodox Theological Seminary recently celebrated its 40-years' anniversary. The seminary was originally situated in Sordavala but was evacuated to Helsinki (Helsingfors) after the war. The Ministry of Education has now presented it with a former frontier guard-house in Kumaljarvi, Porkkala. The seminary, the head of which is Johannes Sukola, offers a six years' course but at the moment there are only new students.

The Orthodox Church in Sweden, the theological faculty at Helsinki (Helsingfors), the Orthodox Church Board, and the Lutheran National Church were represented at the anniversary celebrations.

Proposal for the Creation of a New See in Helsinki (Helsingfors).

A group of churchmen in Helsinki (Helsingfors) are at present working energetically for the creation of a new see in the capital which should be independent of the See of Tampere (Tammerfors). One of the arguments in favour of this is that the Diocese of Tampere (Tammerfors) has grown far too large; another, that in the other Northern countries it has proved to be of great value to have resident bishops in the capital cities.

The question has also been brought up in the Ministry of Education. The erection of a new see is financed by the Government, according to present law, which in this case would mean an added expenditure of app. 10 million Finnish marks annually. The question will probably also be discussed at the Church Assembly now taking place in Turku (Åbo).

Evangelization Campaign in Helsinki (Helsingfors).

From 1st - 16th November, the Finnish congregations in Helsinki (Helsingfors) belonging to the Lutheran National Church will conduct a large-scale campaign in order to get in touch with a larger part of

the population. Immediately leading up to the campaign a visiting service will take place in all the congregations concerned by specia ly trained laymen so that every single home may receive a personal i vitation to attend the meetings and church services during the campaign. Among the principal speakers will be Bishop Helge Ljungberg, Stockholm, Rev. Fr. WislØff, Oslo, and Senator Oskari Tokoi, USA.

The Finnish Missionary Society to Celebrate Centenary.

In 1959 the Finnish Missionary Society will celebrate its centenary. The event will be marked by special services in all the cathe rals in the country on January 18th, and the main celebration will take place the day after in the Assembly Hall of the University of Helsinki (Helsingfors) followed by a thanksgiving service in the Sto kyrkan. The young people will have their own celebration in the bigg meeting hall in the city and at the business college there will be a mission exhibition and film shows. There will be an opportunity for clergymen to attend special lectures on mission problems by professo from other countries also. In June the Missionary Society will arran a summer festival and in the autumn there will be anniversary celebrations in all the various congregations.

Northern Conference for Ministers to Deaf-and-Dumb Invalids.

17 clergymen working in congregations of deaf-and-dumb persons in the Northern countries met recently at the Laymen's Institute at Järvenpää for a conference dealing with the external and internal conditions and forms for pastoral care. In Norway there are 315, in Denmark 500, in Sweden 1.000 and in Finland 1.330 deaf-and-dumb invalids for every clergyman doing this special kind of work.

NORWAY

17.5 Million Norwegian Crowns for Foreign Missions in 1957.

A combined statistics for all the Norwegian missionary societie published recently, shows that in 1957 a total of 17.5 million Norwegian crowns were donated toward foreign mission work. That is 1.2 million crowns more than the previous year, or an increase of 7.2 %. Of the 17.5 million crowns 6.8 million were given to the Norwegian Missionary Society, 4.8 million to the Norwegian Lutheran Mission, and 2.3 million to the Santal Missionary Society. In 1957 there were 949 Norwegian missionaries in active service which is 18 less than in the previous year.

Two More Churches Rebuilt in Northern Norway.

On September 28th and October 5th the Bishop of North Hålogalan Alf Wiig dedicated two more churches which have been rebuilt after the devastation of the war, viz. the churches in Kautakeino and Vard Still four more churches are under construction and in a couple of years it is expected to have all the damaged churches rebuilt, besides having put up several new ones.

Last month the foundation stone was laid for the new church at Kirkenes which is to be finished by the autumn of 1959.

More Divinity Students in Norway.

More new divinity students than for many years have been entered at the Theological Faculty at the University of Oslo as well as at the Free Theological Faculty. The exact number is not yet known but it is quite evident that the decrease in the number of theological students which has characterized latter years is now being replaced by a marked increase. At the Free Theological Faculty alone 25 new divinity students have been signed up in advance.

Need for Church Night Service.

"The Night Service of the Church" which is situated on the premises of the Oslo Home Mission has very quickly proved its worth. The night service was established along the lines of similar services in the other Northern capital cities. The centre is open from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. for calls either in person or by telephone. Some 60 clergymen in Oslo have promised to take turns at doing one night's duty. The night service has been advertized in the press and is in charge of the Rev. Wilhelm Tronsen.

1.200 Christian Study Circles in Function.

The Norwegian Christian Study Council to which are affiliated 27 Christian organizations has existed for six years only but already now it has become one of the biggest study organizations in Norway. 1.200 study circles with app. 10.550 members have been registered by the Study Council which is an increase of 40 % from last year. The greatest increase is that of the Bible study circles of which there are now 250 more than last year.

Moslems to Erect Mosque in Oslo.

The first mosque in the Northern countries will be erected in Oslo. Representatives of the Mohammedan Mission to Scandinavia have been in Oslo in order to find a suitable site for a mission centre. At first it was planned to build such a centre in Sweden but for reasons of exchange it was decided to choose Norway instead.

In the Norwegian daily paper "Morgenbladet" Kamal Yousuf from Pakistan who has been sent as a missionary by the Islamic sect called the Ahmadiyya Movement declares that his two years of mission work in Sweden have been most encouraging and that he has the best hopes for the future. Seven Swedes and one Norwegian have been converted to Islam.

In a commentary on this piece of news the Christian daily newspaper in Oslo "Vårt Land" writes that the right reaction to this from the Church and Christian people must be to take up the challenge with the pure weapons of the Spirit and not to be satisfied with mere protests. The paper regards the establishment of an Islamic mission centre in the Northern countries as another example of the new missionary zeal evident in recent years within several of the big world religions which opens up for quite unfamiliar perspectives.

"Any particularly great progress may hardly be expected", the paper writes, "but on the other hand one must undoubtedly be careful of prophesying anything. The religiously indifferent masses may be stirred and will then constitute a sadly great mission field in a so-called Christian Europe."

SWEDEN

Will Women Pastors Lead to Disruption of the Church?

The most active opponents of the decision by the Church Assembly to give women access to take holy orders in the Swedish Lutheran National Church are to meet from 3rd - 5th November in order to draw up a policy of action by a confessional front within the Church, the Dean G.A. Danell, Växjö, states in the paper "Nyheterna".

The Dean has described the decision by the Church Assembly as "the worst debasement of the Church". The bishops have failed both the Confession and the people, he declared in the press and continued "We who have said no to women pastors consider ourselves to be the true Swedish Church". During the closing debate at the Assembly the Dean stated: "To us the Act means that the Church makes light of one of the Lord's commandments and we cannot acknowledge a bishop who ordains women as true shepherd and teacher."

According to the Dean the aim of the confessional front should be to lead the Church back to its true doctrines. "Should we not succeed in this, however," he adds, " then there will be no other course than to establish a free church on the same basis as the Swedish Lutheran National Church."

In his closing remarks Bishop Bo Giertz who was the strongest opponent of the Act among the bishops, emphasized that the possibility for a continued collaboration must be preserved. "Even among the adherents of women pastors there is an honest desire to follow the word of God. I pray for the Church of Sweden. We cannot all of us be right. May God forgive those who break His law, whosoever they may be."

A number of divinity students at the University of Lund have threatened to resign from the Church as a protest against the decision by the Church Assembly and 12 graduates in theology at Uppsala who are to be ordained after Christmas have informed the bishop that they regard the decision as being contrary to the word of God and consequently to the ecclesiastical promise for which reason they leave it to the bishop to decide whether he wants to ordain them in these circumstances.

As mentioned in the last number of CN the bishops are free to decide whether to ordain women or not but since 6 of the bishops, among them the new Archbishop Dr. Gunnar Hultgren, were in favour of women pastors there is hardly any doubt but that the Act permitting women to be ordained will be put into use when it comes into force on January 1st. One of the first women in orders will probably be Britta Olén, a clergyman's daughter who works on the mission field in South Africa but is on furlough in Sweden at the moment.

New Laymen's Service Introduced in the Church.

Among the many questions to be decided upon by the Assembly was the suggestion for establishing a new laymen's office in the Church. This service, intended for both men and women, was approved by the Church Assembly and it was further decided to grant 10.000:- Swedish Crowns from the Church Foundation or other funds towards the training of laymen for such offices which are to be established and paid for by the individual congregations themselves.

The Amendment of the Act about Religious Freedom which was passe by Parliament was rejected by a large majority of the Church Assembly The Amendment should make it possible for people to resign from the Lutheran National Church by letter instead of, as at present, by personal appearance at the office of the clergyman in the parish of residence (see CN No. 37). The Assembly felt that the matter had not been properly investigated by Parliament and that the necessity for the Amendment had not been sufficiently motivated. As the Church Assembly has the right of veto in such matters the Amendment cannot be carried by Parliament. Free Church circles have expressed their sincere regre at the attitude of the Church Assembly.

The Assembly has requested Government to investigate the possibility of creating a new see in Norrland with episcopal residence at Östersund.

A proposal for changing the wording of the Creed so that "descended to the dead" should be replaced by "descended into Hell" and "the resurrection of the dead" by "the resurrection of the body" was rejected by a great majority. In the same way a proposal for the employment of mechanical music at church services was also turned do

430.000 Swedish Children Attend Sunday School.

According to a statistics drawn up by the Swedish Sunday School Board some 430.000 Swedish children take part in the Sunday school instruction; 135.000 of these attend the Sunday schools belonging to the Lutheran National Church, 102.000 those of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden and 60.000 those of the Pentecost Mission. The total number has fallen somewhat in the last few years. As there are 1.180.000 children between 5 and 14 years of age in Sweden it means that the Sunday schools are in touch with 37.5 % of them.

Conference of International Federation of Free Evangelical Churches.

At the conference mentioned in the last number of CN which was conducted by the International Federation of Free Evangelical Churche in Jönköping last month the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Friedrich Heitmüller, Director, Hamburg, was re-elected; the Mission Director Gösta Nicklasson, Sweden, became Vice Chairman, and Editor Augustinus Keijer, Sweden, was elected Secretary and Treasurer. The other members of the Committee were the Mission Secretary Toivo Asikainen, Finland, Rev. Jaromir Ondracek, Czecho-Slovakia, and Rev. Samuel Benetreau, France.

It was decided at the conference to establish a special youth committee headed by Rev. S. Benetreau and an invitation by Sweden to an international youth camp in 1960 was accepted.

The next ordinary conference will take place four years from now in either Germany or Denmark, but already in two years an extraordinary conference will be held in Switzerland.

More Churches Than Ever Now Being Built in Stockholm.

Never before in the course of the 700 years of the history of Stockholm have so many churches been built at one time as is the case at the moment, it was stated recently by the Editor Per Helin at a meeting in Stockholm. Three free church buildings have been put up during the last few years, one is under construction and yet another

one is being planned. Four churches and one church hall with accommodation for church activities are being erected by the Lutheran Nationa Church and plans have been drawn up for four more churches.

Large-Scale Church Campaign in Växjö Diocese.

During the week October 5th - 12th a large-scale church campaign was conducted in the diocese of Växjö under the motto: "Count with God The drive had been prepared for a long time by a working committee headed by Dean G.A. Danell and a number of planning conferences were held. The means of advertizing was employed such as putting up posters inserting announcements in the press and issuing a pamphlet of six pag to all the homes in the diocese. Some of the most prominent speakers in the country addressed meetings and services in connection with the campaign and also church play groups and church choirs assisted at these services.

New Translation of the New Testament This Year.

In the near future Professor Hugo Odeberg and Dr. David Hedegård will publish a new translation of the New Testament in which a more direct translation has been attempted than the official one of 1917 as well as a more modern language. The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles have been translated by Professor Odeberg, the others by Dr. Hedegård.

Swedish Missionary Killed in Ethiopia.

The 31-years old missionary in Ethiopia, Anna-Greta Stjärne, belonging to the Evangelical National Missionary Society, has been killed by robbers at Adi Ugri in Ethiopia. She had just returned to Africa after having completed her training in Sweden before taking over a teacher's position at the new mission high school in Addis Abeba. Emperor Haile Selassie has sent a message of condolence to the Swedish Consulate in Addis Abeba on the occasion of the death of Anna-Greta Stjärne.

Episcopal Election in Härnösand.

At the episcopal election at Härnösand where the new Archbishop Dr. Gunnar Hultgren has been bishop until now, the Dean David Lindquist, Härnösand, received 126 votes, Director Ruben Josefson, Uppsala 94; and Dean Ragnar Askmark, Gothenburg, 83. The Government has free hands, but it is expected that Dean Lindquist will be appointed.

A Swede Bishop in the Zulu Church.

The Swedish missionary, Helge Fosseus, at present working in Johannesburg, has been appointed bishop of the Zulu Church in South Africa by the Swedish Church Mission Board. It may be recalled that the Mission Board had made it possible for the Zulu Church Board to elect an African for the episcopal office but the Church Board preferred to elect a white bishop as it was felt that he would be better able than an African to look after the interests of the Zulu Church in the present circumstances when dealing with the Government.

one is being planned. Four churches and one church hall with accommodation for church activities are being erected by the Lutheran National Church and plans have been drawn up for four more churches.

Large-Scale Church Campaign in Vaxjo Diocese.

During the week October 5th - 12th a large-scale church campaign was conducted in the diocese of Vaxjo under the motto: "Count with God". The drive had been prepared for a long time by a working committee headed by Dean G.A. Danell and a number of planning conferences were held. The means of advertising was employed much as putting up posters, inserting announcements in the press and issuing a pamphlet of six pages to all the homes in the diocese. Some of the most prominent speakers in the country addressed meetings and services in connection with the campaign and also church plays, crowds and church choirs assisted at these services.

New Translation of the New Testament This Year.

In the near future Professor Hugo Odeberg and Dr. David Hedegård will publish a new translation of the New Testament in which a more direct translation has been attempted than the official one of 1917 as well as a more modern language. The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles have been translated by Professor Odeberg, the others by Dr. Hedegård.

Swedish Missionary Killed in Ethiopia.

The 37-years old missionary in Ethiopia, Anna-Greta Stjerne, belonging to the Swedish National Missionary Society, has been killed by robbers at Adi Ugri in Ethiopia. She had just returned to Africa after having completed her training in Sweden before taking over a teacher's position at the new missionary high school in Addis Abeba. Emperor Haile Selassie has sent a message of condolence to the Swedish Consulate in Addis Abeba on the occasion of the death of Anna-Greta Stjerne.

Episcopal Election in Hernösand.

At the episcopal election at Hernösand where the new Archbishop Dr. Gunnar Hultgren has been elected until now, the Dean David Lindquist, Hernösand, received 126 votes, Diocesan Karen Jorefson, Uppsala 94; and Dean Ragnar Askmark, Göteborg, 53. The Government has free hands, but it is expected that Dean Lindquist will be appointed.

A Swede Bishop in the Zulu Church.

The Swedish Missionary, Helge Fossenius, at present working in Johannesburg, has been appointed bishop of the Zulu Church in South Africa by the Swedish Church Mission Board. It may be recalled that the Mission Board had made it possible for the Zulu Church Board to elect an African for the episcopal office but the Church Board preferred to elect a white bishop as it was felt that he would be better able than an African to look after the interests of the Zulu Church in the present circumstances when dealing with the Government.

Theological Annex Faculty Established in Stockholm.

On the initiative of Dr. Gösta Hök a theological annex faculty was opened in Stockholm last month, intended for students living in the capital who for either economic or family reasons have difficulty in attending the theological faculties at Uppsala or Lund. The lecture which will take place in the evenings mostly will be given by divinity professors and lecturers at Uppsala and aim at giving a preliminary theological training. So far 16 students who want to become either clergymen or teachers in Christian knowledge have joined the faculty. The annex faculty is supported by a foundation in which not only representatives of the Lutheran National Church but also prominent free church leaders have seats. Dean of the faculty is Bishop Helge Ljungberg, Stockholm. The necessary funds for the running of the faculty are obtained through voluntary contributions.

Swedish Secretary for the European Section of the Baptist World Alliance.

Mission Director Erik Rudén has agreed to become Secretary for Europe of the Baptist World Alliance from the autumn of 1959.

Theological Annex Faculty Established in Stockholm.

On the initiative of Dr. Edvard Jonk a theological annex faculty was opened in Stockholm last month, intended for students living far the capital who for either economic or family reasons have difficulty in attending the theological faculties at Uppsala or Lund. The lecture which will take place in the evening mostly will be given by divinity professors and lecturers at Uppsala and aim at giving a preliminary theological training. So far 16 students who want to become either clergymen or teachers in Christian knowledge have joined the faculty, the annex faculty is supported by a foundation in which not only representatives of the Lutheran National Church but also prominent free church leaders have seats. Dean of the faculty is Tiberg, Anlag-berg, Stockholm. The necessary funds for the running of the faculty are obtained through voluntary contributions.

Swedish Secretary for the European Section of the Baptist World Alliance.

Missionsföreningen Erik Nyström has elected to become Secretary for Europe of the Baptist World Alliance from the autumn of 1939.